

Management

Fertility:

Maintaining proper fertility levels will optimize crop yields. Adjust soil NPK levels according to Extension Service recommendations. K-Mag. and foliar applications of Boron are recommended. A pH of 6.5 is preferred.

Pruning and Thinning:

When maintaining the orchard, a modified central leader canopy is recommended. Plant spacing should be 8 feet in the row and 16 feet between rows to allow for equipment access. Pruning should be carried out in the early spring/late winter before bud break. Once the orchard is established, pruning should be done annually. Thinning is suggested to reduce excess fruit loads and minimize biennial bearing.

Pests:

Some diseases and pests that can affect this species include: Black rot, plum pockets, fruit rot, scale and plum curculio. Consult local Extension service recommendations for treatment and control.

Opportunities to Participate

NRCS Field Offices, District Employees, Partners and Volunteers: We need your help!

The Cape May PMC serves a nine-state area extending from Massachusetts to North Carolina. The plant developmental process used by the Cape May PMC relies heavily on the cooperation of our conservation partners to locate native plant stands; collect materials and ship them to Cape May; locate suitable plant testing sites; record plant performance data; and publish new scientific findings. Call the Cape May PMC for more details about how you can help.

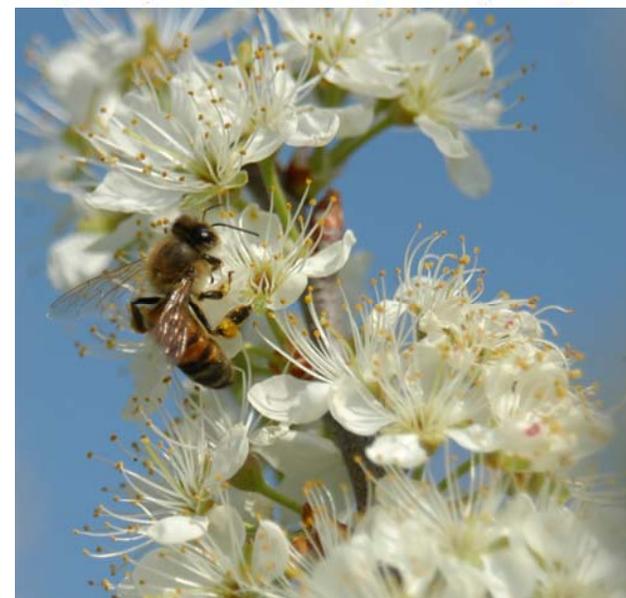
Tours Available

Visitors are always welcome at the PMC. The center is open Monday through Friday. Please call the PMC to schedule your visit.

USDA NRCS Plant Materials Center
1536 Route Nine North
Cape May Court House NJ 08210
Tele: (609) 465-5901
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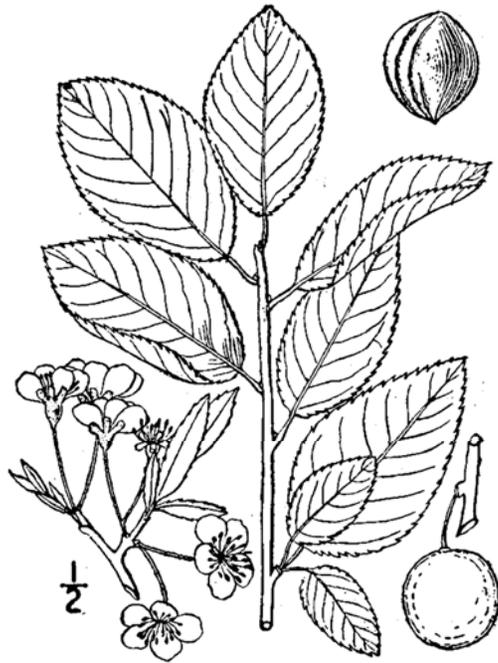


‘Ocean View’ Beach Plum

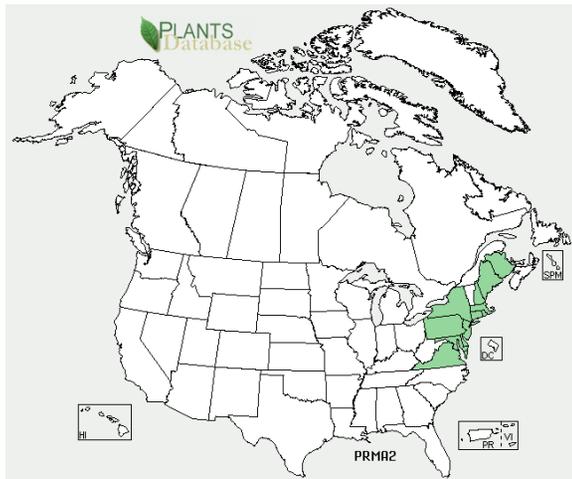
Prunus maritima Marsh.

*Cape May PMC products are
helping people help the land
through better plants and science*

Beach Plum



Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions*. Vol. 2: 325. Courtesy of [Kentucky Native Plant Society](#). Scanned by [Omnitek Inc.](#) [Usage Requirements](#).



Description

Scientific Name:

Prunus maritima Marsh.

Common Name:

Beach plum

Description:

On sand dunes beach plum will reach heights of 4 to 7 feet, but if this species is moved inland, it can attain heights of 16 to 18 feet. When maximum heights have been reached, stem diameter will range from 4 to 8 inches at the root collar. The root system penetrates deep into the soil, and as lower branches are covered by shifting sands, adventitious roots develop. Colonies formed from this layering effect can expand up to 20 feet.

The ovate-shaped leaves of beach plum are firm, alternate, and dull green; they are rough and ridged above, paler and finely hairy beneath. The leaves are half as wide as they are long, measuring 1½ to 2½ inches long; each leaf is attached to the branches with a stout, hairy, often granular stalk. The leaf edges are finely serrated, with broadly triangular to semi-circular shaped, abruptly pointed teeth.

In April to early May, flowers emerge before the leaves. Each snowy white flower measures ¼ to ½ inch across, with very hairy stalks and sepals. Flowers develop in auxiliary clusters of two or three. After pollination occurs by bees or wind, the flowers become pinkish in color. The edible fruit that develops is round and ½ to ¾ inches in diameter.

Beach Plum Fruit



Adaptation

Although indigenous to the mid-Atlantic coastal region, beach plum has been planted successfully on more inland sites. It is well adapted to droughty sites with moderately fertile, slightly acidic, loamy and sandy soils. Beach plum does not perform well on heavy clay soils, but will tolerate moderately well drained conditions.

Beach plum *is* distributed throughout the Northeast. For a current distribution map, please consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Web site.

Application and Uses

Beach plum is most useful in the secondary stabilization and restoration of coastal sand dunes. In New Jersey's Cape May County a Beach Plum Growers Association has been established. Efforts are being made to develop and promote the commercial fruit production of this native plum. This native shrub is also utilized by coastal wildlife.